



Why is there an environmental services payment associated with fishing in Barcelos?

We would like to welcome you to Barcelos, one of the most pristine ecosystems in the world. The 122,000 sq. Km. (47,000 sq. miles-the size of New York State) of the county contains virtually all of its original forest. It is the high functioning of this terrestrial and aquatic ecosystem that generates the best area for freshwater sport fishing in the entire world.

In order to maintain the quality of the peacock bass fishery in Barcelos, it is necessary to do more than place limits on fishing, such as a management system based on catch and release. Although management of the fishery itself is an important step, it is also necessary to preserve the health of this extraordinary ecosystem. The environmental services payment serves two purposes in this regard. First, it pays for enforcement of environmental preservation laws in the region, guarding against a set of illegal activities which are a constant threat. These include predatory commercial fishing, deforestation, mining and settlement by people from outside the region. Second, a portion of the revenue generated is used to help improve the quality of life of the traditional occupants of the region. The people in these rainforest communities are the guardians of the ecosystem and their stewardship has maintained the health of this extraordinary ecosystem. They have foregone the income associated with timbering and other destructive activities in order to keep the system intact. Some of the proceeds from the environmental service payment will be used to help develop sustainable activities in these communities, so that their quality of life can improve, but without negative impacts to the ecosystem. Examples of such sustainable activities would include



sustainable development of the production of aquarium fish, handicrafts and a wide variety of ecotourism activities.

Once again, welcome to Barcelos. We hope your stay is the experience of a lifetime, and that you will return many times to renew this experience.

We invite you to become a “Friend of the Rainforest in the Middle Rio Negro.” (the website is currently under construction). Several other websites are currently under construction. If you leave your e-mail address, we will send you the website addresses as they become available. These sites will include: fishing regulations, fishing tips, production of aquarium fish and sustainable development in Barcelos.